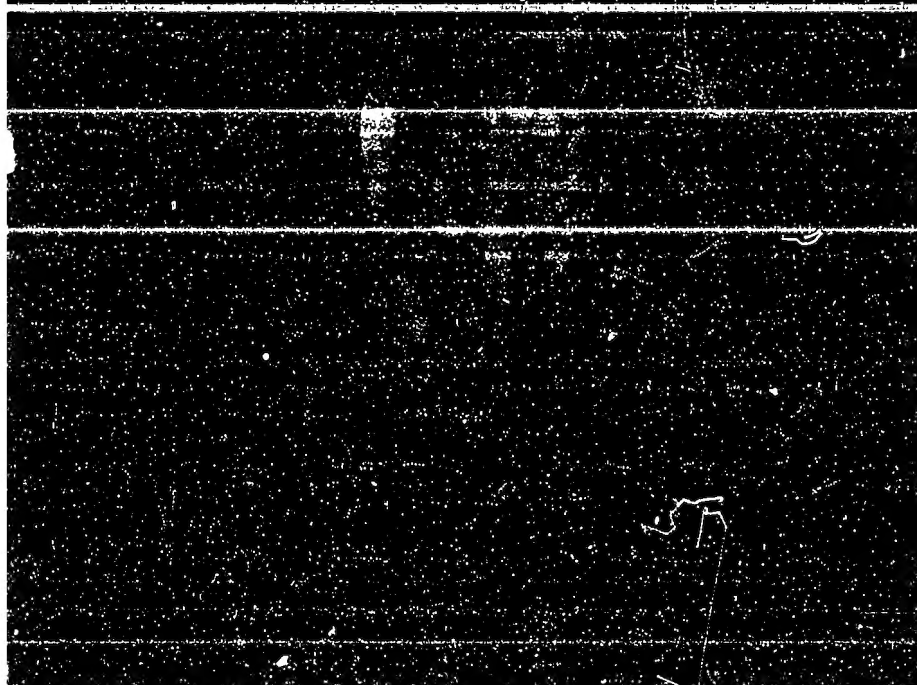


Indian Life in the Great North West





"BRAVELY AND CAREFULLY SHE STRUCK OUT FOR THE SHORE."—p. 64

INDIAN LIFE

IN THE

GREAT NORTH-WEST

BY

EGERTON R. YOUNG

MISSIONARY TO THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES NORTH OF
LAKE WINNIPEG

AUTHOR OF "BY CANOE AND DOG TRAIN," ETC.

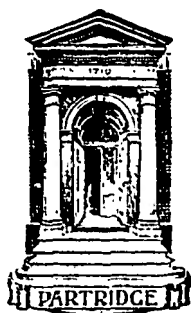
WITH NINE ILLUSTRATIONS

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SANDY HARTE, THE NELSON RIVER INDIAN BOY.

"WHY are you lying here this beautiful day?" I said to a fine-looking Indian boy, who was stretched out on a bed of fur robes and blankets, in a birch-bark wigwam, in an Indian village, in the Nelson River country.

With a sudden movement he quickly jerked away the upper robe that had been over him, and, pointing to his shattered thigh, he said in tones full of bitterness, "Missionary, that is why I am here, instead of being out with the other boys in the sunshine this beautiful day."

I had left my far-away Mission home, and, after travelling for many days with a couple of skilful Indians in a canoe, had succeeded in finding out in the wilderness this band of Indians, who had never before been visited by a missionary. They

were a portion of the great Cree tribe, and although living so far north are a fine-looking people physically. Their country borders on the land of the Eskimo, and in their northern wanderings they sometimes meet with them. But there is no love or friendship between these Indians and the Eskimo.

The Nelson River Indians are splendid hunters, and their rugged country is rich in the choicest of the fur-bearing animals. Very wild, and in some places very picturesque, was the country through which we passed, in order to reach this lonely Indian band.

In some places the stream along which we guided our light canoe was so narrow that we could touch the banks on either side with our paddles. Up these little streams we would go, until they were too small and shallow for even a birch canoe. Then we had to make a portage. That is, instead of our boat carrying us, we had to carry it and its contents, on and on until we found another creek or river. Sometimes we would have to travel six miles in this way over-land. One Indian carried the canoe on his head; another carried, tied up in a great bundle, our bedding, provisions, paddles, and several other things. My load used to be the rifle, shot-gun,

ammunition, meat-kettle, tea-pot, and my bag of books and extra clothes. Encumbered in this way with these awkward loads, we started off looking for water. And often we found a large quantity before we reached it in the way we desired. Sometimes we had to make the portage through a swamp, or muskeg, as they call it in that land, and push on through it, where we often sank up to our knees in the slime and mud, until we reached the creek proceeding out of it. We walked along the side of this little stream until it was deep and wide enough for our little boat. Then we launched our frail craft again, put in our loads, and went on. Very quickly it widened out into a broad stream, and perhaps within two days' travel we were on a beautiful rushing river, or gliding over a splendid lake.

We saw but few inhabitants indeed. Here and there we came across a solitary wigwam on some point, and among the rocks near the shore could be seen a little scaffolding, where the Indian fisherman was skilfully spearing the sturgeon or jack-fish that lurked in the quiet water in the shadow of the great rocks.

We saw but few wild animals, and as we were not on a hunting expedition, we did not go much out of our way except to shoot what we needed



for food. Our mission was to carry the glad tidings of salvation to a people who had never heard the story of redeeming love. With the exception of the old conjurers and medicine men, all the people received us very kindly. These conjurers live on the superstitious fears of the people. They profess to have power over their health, and to be able to make them successful in hunting, or to render all their efforts total failures. As they had heard that the missionaries laughed at their fancied claims, and destroyed their influence in the villages, they opposed our coming and threatened dire vengeance.

However, as the great bulk of the people welcomed us, we spent our time very happily and industriously in preaching and teaching. The revelation to them of God as "our Father" was new, and very much interested them. They had ever thought of the Great Spirit, as they called God, as a Being who was full of anger and hatred towards the human race. So this new revelation of God as the loving Father, compassionate and merciful, delighted and amazed them.

Fortunately we have the Bible printed in their language, in the beautiful Syllabic characters, the invention of the Rev. James Evans, one of the first Wesleyan Indian missionaries. These characters,

which are used instead of letters, are easily learned, and we taught them as fast as possible.

One day, when the school was over for that forenoon, and the people were busily engaged at their various duties, I went from wigwam to wigwam, visiting the people in their homes, and thus personally making their acquaintance.

Very quaint and simple were many of these habitations. Some were of the genuine wigwam style, made of birch-bark or dressed skins. Others were of a nondescript kind. One was a partial excavation, with additions to it made of small trees cut down and but partially trimmed of their branches. These serve as rests for cross poles, on which the venison and other meat, cut into strips, can be easily dried.

Some of the wigwams were oblong in shape, thus telling that the man who there ruled as lord and master, or rather as a despot, was a polygamist. And the number of his wives could be judged by the length his wigwam extended out.

So I moved along from tent to wigwam. In some places I saw what amused, and in others what disgusted me. At length I came into the tent of the chief, and to my surprise and sorrow found this fine-looking boy on the ground in his camp-bed.

To him I put the question which opens our story, and from him received the answer there given.

After I had looked at his wound, I sat down beside him and heard from his lips the sad story of the misfortune which had crippled him for life. It seems that he and another boy were out shooting. Sandy was walking on ahead, when the gun of his comrade behind him in the trail accidentally went off and poured its contents into his leg, making him a cripple for life.

I felt very sorry for Sandy, and had quite a chat with him; and then asked him if he would like to be able to read the Word of God. His bright eyes glistened with pleasure, and his response was so genuine that I got out pencil and paper and, making the Cree characters, gave him his first lesson. I often went back and gave him additional instruction, and soon I became intensely interested in him.

Before these Indians became Christians, it was no uncommon thing for them to put their aged, and infirm, and hopelessly wounded ones to death. But Pe-pe-qua-na-pu-a was the chief's son, and so he was cared for. His father was a fine-looking man, and at Pe-pe-qua-na-pu-a's own request he was given the English name of Sandy Harte, by which name we write about him.

My mission-field was a very large one, being of much greater area than all England. As I had to travel over it in summer in a birch canoe, and in winter with dog trains, I could not remain very long in one place. And so, after a few weeks' stay at this village, I had to start for other parts.

But before leaving I happened to say to some of the Indians, "What a pity it is that Sandy is not educated! If he were only educated enough to be your teacher, what a good thing it would be! He will never have the full use of his leg again, and so will not be able to become a great hunter; but if he had an education he might be such a blessing to you all!"

Soon after, I bade farewell to those Northern Indians, who had received me so kindly; and then, with my two Indian canoe-men, started for our far-away home. We had plenty of strange adventures, for our trip was made through a very wild and rough country. We shot a fine black bear, and enjoyed picking his ribs for our first meal, after having our battle with him. We came very near being drowned in the rapids of one of the great rivers, and we were often drenched with the rain. However, after many hardships and dangers, we reached our home in safety.

About a year later, as I was looking out over



the lake in front of our home, I saw a canoe, with some Indians in it, coming towards me. When they landed, two of them came up to me and said they were very much pleased to see me; and, almost before I could reply, or call to mind where I had seen them, one of the Indians said, "We remember your good words to us, when you were at Nelson River, about Sandy."

"So you come all the way from Nelson River, do you?" said I, now recognizing them.

"Yes, we have come all the way, because we remember your good words to us. And we have brought Sandy along," they replied.

"Sandy along! Who is Sandy?" I answered.

"Why, our good chief's son, Pe-pe-qua-na-pu-a—Sandy you call him—he who was shot in the leg. We have brought him along, for we remember your words, so sweet to us, about him."

"What were my words?" I said, as I could not for the moment call up what was in their minds.

"Why, your words were," they replied: "'What a pity it is that Sandy is not educated! If he were educated he might be such a blessing to you all!' We have not forgotten it. We have often talked about it. What you said to us, and taught us from the great Book, was so good, we are hungry



SANDY'S FATHER.




for more. We are willing to be taught. You cannot come all the time. We want some one to be with us, so we have brought Sandy all the way in the canoe, to be taught by you, and then to come back to us, and we will learn of him."

There was no mistake about it. There he was in the middle of the canoe, looking up at me with those brilliant black eyes that I had first seen in that tent far away.

So I went down and spoke kindly to the lad, and shook hands with him, and invited all the Indians into the house.

To Mrs. Young I told the story, and we had to decide quickly what to do. He had come to us during the first Riel Rebellion, and there was much excitement and privation. Riel was a French half-breed, in the Red River country. As he seemed, when a boy, to be a bright, clever lad, a lady of wealth had him sent to the province of Quebec, to be educated for the Roman Catholic priesthood. He, however, turned out to be such a disreputable character at school that he was sent home to Red River in disgrace. He was a born agitator. His father before him had given much trouble to the Hudson Bay Company and to others in that then little known country.



Riel succeeded in collecting several hundreds of the French half-breeds around him, and having suddenly taken possession of Fort Garry, which belonged to the Hudson Bay Company, the rebels became virtual masters of the country for over a year. Fort Garry was strongly built, and as these rebels had found abundance of arms and ammunition in the place, they were able to defy all the efforts of the loyal settlers to dispossess them. They terrorized the settlement, and added murder to their many other crimes in foully putting to death an industrious, sober young Scotchman, named Scott, whose only crime was loyalty to his Queen and country. They likewise disorganized the trade of the country, and made life uncertain and full of discomfort to those near at hand; also filling with vexation and disquietude those of us who were helpless spectators from afar.

That winter we were living far north of the actual scene of the trouble, yet our supplies had in a great measure been cut off, and we were existing on very scant rations indeed. And, now that Sandy had arrived, there was another mouth to feed, and another body to clothe.

After talking the matter over with my wife, and asking Divine direction, the noble woman said, "The Lord is in it, and He who has sent the

mouth to be filled will surely supply all our additional requirements."

So we cheerfully received Sandy into our home, and made him as one of our family. He was in a deplorable condition in more ways than one, and, coming from a wild band of Indians, who were in complete ignorance of the ways of white people, he had many things to learn.

Having the Indian prejudices against women, it was at first difficult to get him to pay attention to anything Mrs. Young said. He thought it humiliating and degrading to obey a woman's requests. Yet we both treated him with the greatest kindness, and hoped and prayed that time and the grace of God would do all that was requisite for him. He was a bright, close student, and made rapid progress, and soon was able to read. For a time, the novelty of his new surroundings kept him interested, and he seemed quite at home, making many friends among our Christian Indians, who became much interested in him. He went to the Sunday school, and attended the various services in the church; but for a long time it seemed as though it was only in the spirit of mere idle curiosity. He merely went to church because others did so.

When the spring came, and the ice and snow



left the rivers and lakes, he became quite homesick, and longed to go back to his forest wigwam again. We talked kindly to him, and urged him to apply his mind to his lessons, but he only got worse.

One day, instead of going to school he hobbled away on his crutches to a point of land which jutted far out into the lake. In the evening the teacher came to know what was the matter with Sandy, as he had not been at school that day. We were alarmed, and at once began a search for the absentee. We found him among the rocks, on this point, crying bitterly for his Nelson River home. Seeing that I had to change my style of dealing with him, I picked up a big stick, and rushing at him, sternly ordered him to get up immediately and go back to our home as quickly as possible.

With a frightened look into my face, to see how much I meant, he sprang up and hurried home. I gave him a great scolding, and asked him if he thought such conduct was a fair return for all our kindness to him. Then I said, "Go up to your room and bring down all your torn and soiled clothes and moccasins." With a sad look he obeyed, and soon returned with his bundle. After I had looked over the lot, I took them away, and

calling in an Indian woman, gave her some soap and sewing material, and told her to take these things and wash and mend them all nicely, then bring them back to Sandy, and I would pay her for her trouble.

When Sandy saw his clothes go away he was in great trouble, as he had not heard they were to be returned to him. I let him grieve for a while, and then, when the clean bundle arrived, I added to it new pants, shirts, moccasins, a bright handkerchief, and a new hat. Poor boy, he was bewildered. He could not speak his thanks ; but his glistening tear-dimmed eyes told us all that he was cured, and conquered. But he was greatly perplexed. So he went over to see, and have a talk with, one of the Indians, who was a sensible Christian man.

Said Sandy to him, "I cannot make out our missionary. When he came after me, to the point, he seemed so very angry, and he took up the big stick to strike me. Why, he nearly frightened the life out of me, although he did not once strike me. Then he made me bring down all my clothes, and of course, when I saw the woman carry them away, I never expected to see them again. But I did. They came back clean and mended ; and he has added more to them. Why, I never dreamed of having so many nice clean clothes. I cannot under-



stand it. The missionary at first seemed as though he would thrash me, and then he turned round and gave me all these good things."

The Christian Indian, who told us about it afterwards, let him speak on, and then gave him a faithful talk, which greatly helped him.

This man said, "The missionary and his kind wife have come here to do us good. They have left their friends far away. When your two friends brought you here, they took you into their house. There is not one of us but would be glad to be treated as you have been. If they have food they share it with you. You have had medicine and bandages for your sore leg. You are well dressed. They have been like parents to you. Yet you have not been thankful. You have acted badly. You ran away from school. You made their hearts alarmed for fear something had happened to you. The worst thing is, you do not obey Ookemasquao (Mrs. Young) as you ought. White ladies are to be as much respected and obeyed as white men. Yet they have been so patient with you. They keep hoping you will get better as you get older, but you have got worse lately, and so the missionary had to seem so cross. He felt sorry for you, but his heart was kind towards you all the time, and so, when you went back, he showed his love to

you by his presents. The missionary and his wife have nothing in their hearts but love towards you. You must be good and thankful. They are praying much for you, and hope you will yet become a good Christian, and be a great blessing to your own people."

Thus the sensible Christian man talked to this Indian lad, and to him it was a revelation.

From that day there was a decided change for the better in Sandy. He was obedient and studious, and anxious to do what he could in return for kindness done to him. He was a splendid shot; he and I had many a fine hunting excursion together; and frequently he would go off alone, and return with many very fine ducks.

Like all Indian boys, he was very clever with the bow and arrow. I remember being out with him once on a shooting excursion to what we called the old Norway House Fort. Here, many years before, the Hudson Bay Company had had a post for trading with the Indians, but they had long since given it up for the new one in the much better site near to the Indian village. However, there was splendid duck-shooting there at times, and so Sandy and I had paddled our canoe the twenty miles' trip, and had enjoyed some capital sport. Once we saw a fine large duck before us,

and Sandy, who was in the bow of the canoe, carefully lifted his gun and fired at it. Whether it was owing to the movement of the canoe or not, I cannot say; anyhow he missed the duck with the gun. But quick as a flash of light he threw the gun down, and, catching up his bow and arrow, fired at the duck, which, of course, had instantly risen, and was flying directly away from us in front. Imagine my surprise and delight to see the arrow wing its way so unerringly that it pierced the duck, and brought it suddenly down in the river. I was much pleased, and gave him great praise for his skill and accuracy. So he became quite helpful to us, and often added considerably to our bill of fare. And very glad was he to be able, in this way, to do some helpful things.

But the melancholy news came to him, and us, of the death of his sister, a beautiful Indian girl, whom he dearly loved. His heart was very sad at the thought that he should see her no more, and he often spoke about her.

Some of the young Indian maidens are very beautiful, and, when they have half a chance, make fine-looking women. But in paganism woman is a slave, and these beautiful girls are so kicked and knocked about by their husbands that they shrink up, and wither early, and look so wretched and

miserable that my heart often used to be filled with indignation, and my blood get hot at the shameful treatment many of them received.

I remember, when in a camp of pagan Indians, seeing a great stalwart hunter come stalking in with his gun on his shoulder, and at once, in stern rough tones, order his poor wife, who had been busily engaged in cutting firewood, to take the carrying strap and hurry away on his back tracks and bring in the deer he had shot.

The poor woman quickly sprang up, and, seizing the long strap, hurried away as ordered. She had to go two or three miles back in the woods before she came to the deer. She tied one end of the strap around its neck and the other around its haunches; by crouching down she succeeded in getting the broad middle part of the strap across her forehead. Then, getting up on her feet with difficulty, she had to carry that heavy load on her back all the way to the wigwam. When she struggled into our midst, panting with fatigue, she quickly threw the load from her back on the ground.

Without allowing her a moment's rest, her tyrannical husband shouted out, "Hurry up; be quick and get my dinner!" The poor woman speedily seized the sharp knife, and soon had the

deer skinned and the pot filled with the savoury meat.

As soon as the meal was cooked, she placed it before her lord and master, who had called some of his male friends to share it with him. For the first time the poor wife had now a chance to rest. But we noticed that where she sat down with the older women the dogs also there clustered. Why they did so at first we could not make out, but we saw very soon. The men attacked their dinner with great gusto. The large pieces of meat disappeared rapidly. When they came to a piece with a bone in it, they quickly cut off or tore off with their teeth the greater part of the meat and then tossed the bone over among the women and dogs, and there was a struggle among them as to which should obtain possession of it!

Fortunately all the tribes were not so bad as this. And where Christianity has been introduced there has been a marvellous change for the better. The Nelson River people were fairly kind to the women, although the men scorned to obey them. So Sandy mourned for his sister, and used to speak frequently about her.

A year or so after this, a very gracious revival began among the Indians, and very much good was done.

So anxious had Sandy become to win our approval that we knew he was willing to take any stand we suggested. But we were so very desirous that his decision for Christ should be built on a deeper foundation than a mere wish to please us, that, while talking with him as usual, we used no special persuasion to bring him to a decision for Jesus, as it was so evident by his life that the good Spirit was graciously working upon his heart, and that he was under deep religious impressions. And soon that blessed hour came. One afternoon while I was urging upon the large audience who had assembled in the church the necessity of immediate decision for Christ, Sandy with others sprang up from his seat near the door and came forward for prayer.

His first audible prayer still rings in my ears, as though uttered but yesterday:—"O, Tapa-yechekayan kissawatotawe nan!" ("O Lord, have mercy upon me!") I knelt beside him, and pointed him to the dear Saviour, the sinner's Friend. He wept on account of his sins, and was deeply anxious for the assurance that even he had an interest in the crucified One. We talked to him of the love of God as revealed in Jesus. We explained to him the way of faith, the look of believing trust; and the ever-blessed Spirit applied

the truth to his heart. Our dear Sandy saw the way, sweetly believed in Jesus, and was so blessedly saved.

Need we add that our Indian boy, so strangely thrown on our care, was doubly dear and precious to us from that hour? We had had our long months of trouble and anxiety about him, and friends, both white and Indian, had thought and told us that what we were doing for him was "love's labour lost." How thankful we both were that we had persevered! We never could help feeling that his coming to us was of the Lord, and we dared not give up our charge. So we accepted it as a trial of patience and of trust, and the reward came at last in this clear, Scriptural conversion.

From that day his presence in our humble Mission home was a benediction. He became a very devout and reverent student of the Word of God; and as its blessed truths opened up before him, he had many questions to ask, and so we had many loving talks about the holy Book.

To spend hours on his knees, with his open Bible before him, was no uncommon thing for Sandy to do. And when he used to come down from his room with his face so radiant he would sometimes say, "Oh, how blind and stupid I was!

I used to think the white man's religion was just like the Indian's, only done in another way ; but now I know—yes, I know it is different, oh, so different ; for do I not feel it in my heart that God is my Father, and His Son my Saviour—my elder Brother ? Oh, yes, I know ! ”

And thus he lived, and studied, and grew, physically and spiritually. His faith never wavered and his simple trust never gave way to doubt.

The long, cold winter came and passed away. During it I travelled some thousands of miles with my dog trains, and among other places visited Nelson River, and had the pleasure of taking down some little gifts from Sandy to his relatives. Great was their joy to hear that he was well and happy ; with manifest pleasure they heard that he was becoming quite a scholar, and was getting on nicely with his studies.

Our trips that winter were very many, and I suffered much, and met with some strange adventures, passing also through some strange scenes. At one place I visited a small band of Saulteaux, and found them sad and gloomy. Death had been among them, and many had passed away.

We give an illustration of a man and his daughter who were the sole survivors of a large family. The mother and other children had been cut off. They



had been buried in the little Indian graveyard at the head of the bay, not far from the wigwams that were clustered near the trees in the distance.

The poor, lonely girl would often visit the quiet graves. Sometimes her father would go with her, but more frequently she went alone. At times she carried a little food, thinking perhaps the spirits of her loved ones might be hungry. She so loved to linger there that her father had to light a little fire for her protection. He feared some skulking grey wolf might attack and speedily kill his only child. She was a bright Indian maiden, and I remember her well. With other girls who had lost loved ones, she used to make cunning little traps of willow twigs and catch the small birds. But it was not to kill them. They would take the poor little struggling things out of the traps, and then, holding them gently but securely in their hands, they would whisper to them words like these :—"Little birds, do you know we have lost some of our loved ones, we have, and our hearts are very sorry and sad. So, little birds, we whisper to you our message of love to our loved ones ; and now go and tell them we do so miss them, and our hearts are so sad without them."

Then they would open their hands, and away the happy birds would fly, glad to regain their



A SAULTEAUX INDIAN AND HIS DAUGHTER.





freedom ; and the girls would believe they had gone to obey their wishes.

While I was there, this little girl fell sick. Everything was done that we could do in that wilderness, hundreds of miles from the nearest doctor. She grew rapidly worse, and after a few days' struggle it was evident the end was near. I felt very sorry for her father, who was much attached to his bright, beautiful child, the last of his family. With his proud, stoical Indian nature he tried hard to keep down his sorrow, but it would show itself, and I did not think less of him because he was human. He clung to me ; and although not as yet a Christian himself, he was much pleased when I told the dying girl of Jesus and the "happy land, far, far away," and knelt down at her side in prayer. As the end drew near, one after another of the Indians in the wigwam quietly went out, and left the poor father and me alone with the dying child.

She seemed to like to have me occasionally moisten her hot, feverish lips with a little sweetened tea ; it was the best, and about the only thing we had. I thought how sad it was that there was no woman's loving hand to minister to her in these feverish hours, and I did so wish that Mrs. Young, who had often been as a ministering angel to



others of these poor people under similar circumstances, had been present. But, alas! she was at her post doing good service among others, hundreds of miles away. So I did the best I could, and in quiet tones spoke occasionally a few words from the blessed Book.

For a time the father sat down, as fixed and rigid as a statue, then he got up and excitedly moved about, and as the end approached I became so absorbed in watching the dying girl that I did not for a few minutes pay any attention to her father.

But there soon came a time when he engrossed the whole of my care. He had taken his gun loaded it with ball, and was prepared to kill himself. There he stood beside me. He had the hammer of the gun pulled back. His big toe, which could move easily in his deer-skin moccasin, was on the trigger, and the muzzle of the gun was against his temples. I saw at once, as I looked into his stern, despairing face, what he proposed to do.

These Saukteaux Indians, like some other tribes, believe in a happy hunting-ground beyond this world, which is to be the home of the Indians. They also believe that if, when a loved one dies, a relative or dear friend can at that very instant

kill himself, his spirit will go along in the company of the one who dies, and for ever they will be permitted to live together in that beautiful place. And this father, believing thus, had resolved to test it.

What a picture he was as he stood there, looking at the dying girl, and waiting for the instant of her death to pull down the trigger, so that the death-dealing bullet might crash into his brain and send him suddenly out of life.

Of course I could not permit such an act if I had strength to prevent it; and so with a sudden spring I got hold of the gun, and tried with all my might to at least keep him from killing himself, if not able to wrench the gun away from him. As I struggled with him, I shouted for help. He was a great stalwart man, and when he saw how resolved I was to oppose him in his sad scheme, he got very angry, and was resolved that the gun must go off, and one or other of us must die. So there we struggled in that wigwam, quite close to the poor child, whose bed was on the ground at our feet. Fortunately help was near, or it is difficult to imagine how the conflict might have ended. My calls for help brought in several men, who quickly comprehended the situation. The gun was soon taken from him, and he was forced down in the



wigwam, and in a minute or two all was quiet and still. Fortunately the dying girl was so deep down in the valley of the shadow of death that she was unconscious of what had been occurring.

And now, while we sat there so quiet and still, the spirit of the loved girl passed away into the other world.

For perhaps ten minutes we remained in the wigwam without a word being spoken; then the men released the father. He was as quiet and gentle as a child.

He had tried to go with his daughter, but had not been successful. There would, therefore, be no use in killing himself now, as she had got so great a start that he could never overtake her. And so, without any anger towards me or any one else, he quietly submitted to what had happened.

The long winter passed away. There was a great deal to do at the Home Mission, but the number of good, earnest Christians was increasing; and as Mrs. Young, with the interpreter and school-master, and the strong band around them, could get on with the work so grandly, I kept on the move among the outside pagan tribes as much as possible. But when I could come home and rest my wearied body and tired dogs, no one would give me a more enthusiastic welcome than Sandy.

Now that he had found the Saviour himself he was so happy when I could tell him of good done, and souls brought to accept Christ as their Saviour, among the tribes around.

The next summer after Sandy's conversion, Mrs. Young and I both noticed that for several days he was restless and excited, and, to use the Indian phrase, there was something on his mind. So we kindly questioned him as to his mental disquietude, and drew out from him that it was solely on account of a visit that was soon to be paid him by quite a number of the *trip-men* of his own Nelson River people. And his anxiety was that, as this was the first opportunity he would have of meeting any of his own people since he had become a Christian, his talk—which he was going to give them on the subject of Christianity—might be made a blessing to them. So, of course, we promised to aid him in the matter.

Then said he, "Oh! I know you will both help me, but you know that most of these boatmen are not yet Christians, and they are so blind and stupid, like I was, about this religion of the Bible, and my trouble is that when I begin to talk to them they will get up and leave before I have said all I have in my heart. I am so afraid I cannot keep them together unless—unless——"

"Unless what?" I said, taking the word out of his mouth.

He looked up in our faces, and seeing nothing but encouragement there, he mustered up courage to say what was in his heart, but which his modesty had caused him to keep back. And it was, "Unless we give them something to eat."

We well knew that the boy was right, for often, to win the poor ignorant creatures and bring them within sound of the Gospel, we had even given the food from our own table, until we ourselves had known what hunger was. Then we could understand how hard it was to give undivided attention to spiritual things on an empty stomach.

"Of course you shall have a dinner for them, Sandy," said Mrs. Young, "and we will do the very best we can for you and your people."

"Is this what has been troubling you for days?" we asked.

"Yes," he replied. "What right had I to ask such a favour from you who have been so kind to me? You let me come into your home when I was wounded, and dark, and wicked. You have fed and clothed me, and treated me as your son; and, best of all, you have led me up into this great joy of knowing that I am a child of God."

His heart filled up, and his voice ceased from deep emotion. Soon, however, he went on :—

“You know how we have at the family altar prayed every day for my people, and, when alone before God, they are always in my heart and prayers, and now that I am to have the chance of speaking to them, I do want it to succeed. You know the poor Indian seems to be able, or willing, anyway, to listen better after he has had something to eat.”

So it was settled, to Sandy's great delight, that when his friends arrived from Nelson River they were to be invited to the Mission house to dinner. They were coming up with the bales of furs, caught the preceding winter, and would carry back to the Hudson Bay Company's post the goods required for the next winter's trade.

This work of “tripping for the Company,” as it is called, is a very important one, and adds greatly to the means of procuring a livelihood possessed by the stalwart Indians.

So wild and inaccessible are many of those vast northern regions that it costs immense sums to get the trader's goods into the “posts,” as the little trading stores are termed, and then it is equally costly to carry the furs out for shipment to England. So remote from the seaboard are some

of these posts, that frequently seven years elapse between the time when the goods are sent out from the Company's establishment and the furs received in exchange for them reach the market. Between York Factory, on the Hudson Bay, where the Company's ship yearly comes with goods, and Norway House, there were about seventy portages. And yet this distance was only one stage in the transportation of the goods for the M'Kenzie River or Athabasca district.

Sandy's friends in coming down from Nelson River with their bales of furs had to make a great many portages. They have come as far up the river as they can, and before them are the rapids or falls, to go up which in their boats is impossible. So the load has to be carried on the men's shoulders, supported by the carrying strap from the forehead. The bundles weigh from seventy to a hundred pounds each. Two are considered a load, although some men would carry three. When the load is all carried round to the next embarking place, beyond the falls or rapids, the boat is also dragged overland by the men, and then again launched.

Not less than two boats travel together, that the double crew may the more easily drag the heavy boats across the portage. Seventy or eighty pieces constitute a boat-load.

A great deal of rivalry exists between the different brigades, as the full complement of boats from each district are called. If two of these brigades happen to reach a portage at the same time, there is a trial of physical endurance and speed that has but few parallels on this globe.

The portage may be from a mile to five miles long. Perhaps there are eight or ten boats in each brigade, fully loaded with bales of goods for the interior of the country. I have witnessed the bloodless strife with most intense interest, as the gallant, stalwart fellows, without uttering an oath or discourteous word to each other, struggled with much pluck and endurance to see which side could the more quickly carry their valuable loads across.

The famous porters of Constantinople may be able to hold their honours against them for strength under enormous loads, but travellers who have seen both at work have not hesitated to give the palm to the Indian, on account of the quickness and agility with which he rushed along under his heavy burden.

It was a beautiful day when these Nelson River Indians came to see us. The table had been put up on the grassy lawn in the front of the house, and a good substantial meal was ready for them, as fortunately our supply boats had arrived from Red River, and we had abundance of food.

Happy Sandy was full of bliss. To watch him, and to observe how interested his people were in him, gave us great delight. He seated his Indian friends to suit his own mind, for his thoughts were more on the after talk than on the substantial meal before them. When all were in the places to which he had assigned them, he said, "Now wait a minute. From the Great Spirit we receive all our blessings. Shut your eyes while I thank Him, and ask His blessing upon us now!"

They readily obeyed Sandy, for was he not the son of their chief, and taught of the missionary? Then they had a good time together. There was nothing rude or unbecoming in any of their actions, and yet the majority of them had never sat at a table before. They had always taken their meals on the ground. Tables are unknown in their wigwams. This was to them a new departure. And yet, a stranger looking on would never have imagined that these polite, courteous men were for the first time in their lives eating at a table, and eating with forks! These latter are considered superfluities in such a country. Give an Indian a knife and a wooden or horn spoon, and what cares he for a fork? But they had them on this occasion, and used them well.

When dinner was ended, some of the Indians

were getting ready to move away, but a few words from Sandy caused them all to remain quietly seated.

Now I could see why he had so arranged them at the beginning. Every one could easily see as well as hear him. It was evident that they were full of curiosity to hear what his message was.

At a little distance Mrs. Young and I were seated, and we were deeply interested in all that was going on. Sandy had his loved Bible and hymn-book with him, and began his service.

Of his address to his people thus gathered before him, I cannot now recall much. But the memory of it is a thing that will live for ever. He told them the story of his coming to our home, and how stupidly and ungratefully he had acted towards us, although our kindness and love had been towards him all the time. Then he told them the story of his conversion. He contrasted their old foolish religion of the conjurers, which had only made them afraid, with what was taught in the blessed Book. He told them of the joy that had been in his heart ever since that day when he knelt in the church and asked for and obtained the pardon of his sins, and the assurance that he was a child of God.

Their faces were studies indeed! To some of

them I had preached, on some of my long journeys, as I had met them in their far-away forest homes. But there were some who had never heard such things before, and they were amazed and almost confounded. Sandy went on, and told them of his anxiety and love for them, and his desires and constant prayers that they should all become Christians, and know for themselves that God loved them as His children. They listened with the most intense interest to the end of his address. Then he opened his Bible and read some of its promises to them, to show that God loved every one, and gave His Son to die for them all.

At his request we united with him, and after a few words of loving entreaty to them to remember Sandy's words, and to do as he had done in giving his heart to the Saviour, a hymn was sung and prayer offered up; then this remarkable service came to an end.

Afterwards they gathered round him, kissed him, asked many questions, and had some loving talks. And before leaving they all came and shook hands with us, thanking us for our great love and kindness to their Ookemasis, the young chief, as they laughingly called him then.

We kept Sandy with us as long as we lived at Norway House. When we left that Mission, to

begin one among the Saulteaux, Sandy went with me in a canoe to my first camping-place. Mrs. Young and the children had gone on ahead of Sandy and me a few weeks before, for a visit to the friends at home. From them Sandy had parted with the greatest sorrow, for even the little ones had learned to love "dear Sandy."

On the last evening we were to spend together, Sandy helped me to put up my little tent, and slept with me in it. We talked about many things in a minor tone of sadness, as the hours passed away, ere we fell asleep.

Early the next morning we were aroused by our guide shouting out: "Up! up! Everybody up! Fair wind, we must be off!"

So all was hurry and excitement. The boatmen rejoice when the cry is "fair wind," for they can then hoist their sail, and have a very pleasant, joyous time, as the boats gaily glide along. It is very different when there is a calm. Then the heavy oars are pulled out, and it is hard rowing for, it may be, days together.

A hasty breakfast was prepared and eaten, and we gathered for morning prayers. I was surprised to find that, during the night, many scores of the Indians, from whom I had said "Farewell" at the Mission, had come on in their canoes to see



us once more. We sang together a favourite hymn in Cree :—

“ Jesus ne-te-tā ye moo-win,
Ispenik ka ke e-too-tak,
We-ya piko ne mah-me-sin,
Nestah ka we e-too tā yan.”

The English is :—

‘ Jesus my all to heaven is gone,
He whom I fix my eyes upon ;
His path I see, and I’ll pursue
The narrow way till Him I view.”

After singing the whole of this beautiful hymn in Indian, which is a very great favourite with them, and one of the first translated into their language, we sang the grand old doxology beginning—

“ Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.”

But in the Cree language eight lines are required to convey anything like the fulness of our English form.

Here it is as we sang it that morning :—

“ Mamechemeeck samaneto,
Ta to askeek ka ahyahyak,
Mena ispenik wā clec yak,
Mamechemeeck samaneto.

Mamechemeeck wa yootaweek,
Mena Jesus wa koosesek,
Me-na kanatesit ah-chak,
Mamoowe mah mamechemeeck.”

After prayers, I said "Good-bye" to them all with regret, for I was deeply attached to them.

The parting from Sandy was the hardest of all. So I purposely left him to the last, and when I came to him I could only put my arm around his neck and kiss him, and then spring into the boat, which was quickly pushed off, and the long journey to the land of the Saulteaux had begun.

Poor Sandy pulled his hat down over his eyes and wept like a child ; and there were others, who seldom wept before, who found it hard to keep from weeping then. I watched him long as he stood there—so still, so statuesque—and I thought of another shore, and another voyage, and a glad reunion. We shall meet again.

I have never seen him since the morning we parted, a few miles south of Norway House. But his record ever since has been a good one. Not very long after, he returned to Nelson River to his own people. He has been true to his vows, and is a useful, loving Christian, doing what work he can for the Master, and earning his living as well as possible ; a burden to nobody, but a blessing to many.

WHO IS THIS JESUS?

PART I

HERE is a sweet story of a little Indian girl. It shows how a few lessons learned in early life about religious truth enabled her to be a great blessing to her stern old uncle, a great Indian hunter in the cold north land. I am sure when you have read the story you will say it is a beautiful fulfilment of the prophecy uttered long ago, "A little child shall lead them."

Astumastao was the name of our little Indian girl. It seems to be rather a long name, but, like all Indian names, it is very expressive. It means "coming to the light," or "coming dawn." She was born in a birch-bark wigwam, in the wild country far north of the Nelson River. When out far from shore in a canoe on the great lake Athabasca, her father and mother were caught in

a terrible storm and both were drowned. Astumastao was at that time about six years old. A poor little orphan girl, she was now cast upon the care of her relations, who treated her harshly, and often half starved her for days together.

One summer it fortunately happened that there visited that country a devoted missionary, who was travelling through those wild regions, preaching the Gospel among the different tribes. The boat in which he journeyed was a canoe made out of sheet tin. He had as his canoe-men two stalwart Christian Indians, one of whom, whose name was Hassel, acted as his interpreter, as he could speak fluently the languages of many tribes.

While Mr. Evans, the missionary, tarried at this village, holding services as often as he could get a congregation, he noticed the poor little Indian girl and inquired about her. When he learned her sad history, he asked her people to give her to him. Glad to thus easily get rid of her, they quickly complied with his request, and so the little orphan child was taken to the far-away Mission home at Norway House. It was a long, long journey of hundreds of miles, and there were many long, rough portages to cross. When the child wearied out on the way, one of the stalwart men would carry her over the roughest places.

At night they gathered old hay from the dried-out beavers' meadows, or cut off balsam branches, and thus made her cosy little beds where she sweetly slept, with no roof over her but the stars. For food they gave her the choicest pieces of the wild ducks or geese or beaver which they shot on the way.

When they reached Norway House the poor little orphan girl was kindly welcomed by the good wife of the devoted missionary. Mrs. Evans was just as anxious as her husband to do all the good possible to the poor Indians. So Astumastao was bathed and then dressed in clean new garments, which were a great contrast to the wretched garb in which Mr. Evans had found her. A few weeks of kind treatment and nourishing food made a wonderful change in the child.

The Indian Mission school at that time was under the charge of a Miss Adams. Like many other noble women, she had left a happy home and many friends in civilization, and had gone out to that desolate country to be a blessing and a benediction to the people. Long years have passed since she finished her work in that land and went home to her eternal reward, yet the memory of her beautiful life and successful work continues to this day.

Miss Adams was at once deeply interested in Astumastao. Living in the same Mission home into which the poor child had been brought, she



ASTUMASTAO, THE LITTLE INDIAN ORPHAN.

was anxious to do all she could for her welfare. She took her into the Mission school, and was constant and zealous in her efforts to instil into

this mind so dark and ignorant some knowledge that would lead her into a higher, better life.

To her great joy she found that the child was bright and intelligent, and gifted with an exceedingly retentive memory. Hence she was able to quickly grasp the meaning of what she was taught, as well as to repeat many verses of the Bible, and some sweet hymns which had been translated into her own language. Although she had never heard any singing beyond the monotonous droning of the Indian conjurers in their superstitious pagan rites, yet here under Miss Adams' loving care she speedily developed a sweet voice for song, and delighted exceedingly in this new-found joy.

Thus passed a happy year, in which Astumastao saw and learned many things, not only about happy home life, but also about the one living and true God.

Some twelve months after Mr. Evans had rescued her from her cruel relatives, at the place where her parents had been drowned, there came from another part of the country to the trading-post near Norway House an uncle of Astumastao. He was a great hunter, and had with him a large quantity of valuable furs to exchange for supplies he needed. As he had no children of his own, when he saw the bright little girl who was his

brother's daughter, he insisted on taking her back with him to his distant wigwam home. Of course the missionary and his family and Miss Adams were all very sorry to have her go, but they were powerless to prevent it, and so with deep grief they saw Astumastao embark in a birch canoe with her uncle and aunt, and paddle away for ever out of their sight, as they never in this life saw her again.

It was a long, long journey to the land of this uncle, whose name was Kistayimoowin. He lived in a region far distant from that in which Astumastao's other relatives had their hunting-grounds. Neither he nor his wife were actually cruel to their young niece, of whom they had thus taken possession, but the lot of a young Indian girl in any pagan abode is from our standpoint often a very sad one. As the winters are there long and cold, she has to chop wood, carry water often long distances from some lake or river, and do many other toilsome things. She seldom gets any kind words of encouragement, but is often beaten severely if the men around happen to be in an ugly mood. But Astumastao, remembering some loving advice given her by Miss Adams ere they parted, resolved to do all she could to be a blessing to her uncle and aunt, and so she was



industrious and obedient, and on the whole had at first as good a time as could be expected under the circumstances. She loved to sing over the sweet hymns she had been taught in the now far-away Mission Sunday school, and tried to keep fresh in her memory the verses of the Great Book, as well as the lessons taught her by the good white friends at that place.

Thus she lived for a year or so, and then there was a sad change for the worse. This was caused by the arrival in their midst of another and older uncle, who was a cruel, superstitious old conjurer. Years before he had been robbed and swindled by some wicked white traders, who had first made him drunk with their fire-water, and then robbed him of a valuable pack of furs. This cruel treatment had so enraged him that he had become a bitter enemy of all white people, and was resolved to do all he could, with the exception of the actual necessary barter of furs for needed supplies, to keep the Indians from walking, as he explained it, in the white man's ways. To enable him the more thoroughly to succeed, he went through all the years of suffering and fasting and dreaming required to make himself a great conjurer. We have not room here to tell of all the ways by which an Indian at length reaches to this position,

and becomes an adept in the use of his poisons and other things, thus terrorizing over the rest of the people. Suffice to say that Koosapatum was feared and dreaded by all the people. When he first entered the wigwam of his brother Kistayimoowin, he did not condescend to notice our bright little Astumastao any more than he would a strange dog. Then, was she not the child of relatives against whom the bad spirit had become enraged, and therefore he had drowned them in the great lake? So he looked out of his cruel eyes on the child with disfavour.

Poor Astumastao, with a child's shrewd intuition, saw that her dead father's brother was unfriendly, but she was resolved to disarm his prejudice and cause him, if possible, to look kindly upon her, even if she never won from him a pleasant word. She seemed to anticipate his every wish, and was really in hopes that she would succeed. So industrious was she, and busy in waiting on him and the others, that some days passed without her having audibly repeated any of her beautiful verses from the Bible, or quietly sung one of her sweet hymns. One day, after a hearty meal of venison, while the uncles seemed to be dozing over their calumets in the wigwam, she took up a half-finished moccasin, and seating herself outside,

began industriously to finish it. While she sewed on, a familiar song came into her young heart, and sweetly floated out on the forest air. Its singing carried her back to the far-away Mission Sunday school; as she sang she seemed to see the loved teacher and the children there, and so, imagining she was once more with them, she poured out, as she was there wont to do, her voice in sweetest melody. Poor Astumastao, little did she imagine the dire results or the sad ending of her song! When her uncle, the conjurer, in a drowsy state over his tobacco, first heard her sweet notes he thought they were those of a bird, but as her voice rose loud and strong, and he was able to comprehend the meaning of the words she sang, all his hatred of the white man rose up like a tempest within him and filled him with rage. Uttering some dire imprecations on his brother who allowed such things, he rushed out, and seizing the little girl, he shook and pounded her until she fell senseless to the ground. Then, still raging with fury, he strode away, muttering his threats of death to all of them if ever such sounds were there again heard.

PART II

WHEN Astumastao regained consciousness she was lying on a bed of rabbit-skin robes and balsam boughs in the wigwam, with her aunt bathing her head with cold water. It required some time for her to realize her situation. The attack upon her by her uncle had been so sudden and severe that she was pounded into unconsciousness almost before she had been able to realize what it was that caused such a terrible outburst of anger and brought upon her such cruel treatment. However, when she was able to think, there came to her some dim consciousness of the cause, and as only her aunt was with her in the wigwam, and had in her quiet way always been friendly to her, she inquired of her what had happened, and what had been the cause of it. From her she learned all, and of course it filled her little heart with consternation and sorrow, especially when she was told of the terrible threats of the wicked uncle—that he would kill them all by poisoning if ever the songs were heard again.

So from that hour the little forest singer had to hush her notes and keep mute and still. Especially was this the case while the elder uncle was in the

vicinity. Often the song would seem to burst out of itself, but Astumastao, filled with anxiety at what might happen to her uncle Kistayimoowin, and her aunt, rather than for herself, checked the song and had to be satisfied with its melody in her heart. 'Tis true that when she went off on the long trail in the forest, visiting her rabbit and partridge snares, she would, when in the solitudes, unburden her heart and sing her sweet songs with a joyous gladness that cheered her up for many a day.

Years sped by, and the memory of that happy year at the far-off Mission gradually faded away. Living among a people who were still in the darkness of paganism, with all their superstitious beliefs universally abounding, and the powers of the conjurers or medicine men still resting upon them, this young maiden found it hard work to escape persecution in her efforts to live up to the sweet, simple lessons of divine teaching she had been taught during that one all-too-brief year of her childhood days, and which she still tried to keep alive by her Scripture verses and songs. To her sorrow she found that verse by verse slipped away from her memory, and at length but very few remained.

Having been so young, and at the Mission for so

short a time, she had not acquired the art of reading. And even if she had been able to read, there were no books at that time among her own people.

Thus she lived, and at length grew up to be a beautiful young woman. She was taller than most of the dusky maidens of that Indian village, and while full of brightness and life was ever observed to keep herself aloof from the Indian dances and pagan ceremonies. It was fortunate for her that there were no other young maidens in her uncle's wigwam. If it had been so he might have heartlessly disposed of her to some Indian suitor who had been able to bring the quantity of guns and blankets her uncle had decided upon as her price. As it was, the uncle had so sternly repelled the few who had dared to make advances for her that she was still free as the breezes that swept over those northern lakes. For this she was grateful to him. The fact was, she had, as the result of her youthful glimpses into Christianity, taken such a dislike to the existing paganism which she saw around her, that the thought of marriage to any other than a Christian was most repugnant to her.

Thus the years rolled on, and Astumastao still, when possible, sang what hymns she could remember and pondered over in her heart the few



sweet passages of Sacred Writ that had become engraven on memory's tablet.

One summer her uncle, Kistayimoowin, decided to take his wife and niece and camp out on a small island in a large lake. This was frequently done by these wandering Indians. The waters supplied them with abundance of fish, and the numerous passing flocks of ducks and geese and other aquatic birds furnished them with quite a variety of food. Here for some time they lived very pleasantly. One of their chief pleasures was that they were away from the baneful influence of Koosapatum, the conjurer, whose very presence threw a gloom over every one.

Emboldened by the increasing kindness of Kistayimoowin, now that he was away from his wicked brother's blighting influence, Astumastao selected in a quiet part of the island a bower-like retreat to which, when her wigwam duties were attended to, she could quietly slip away; and while her fingers were busy with some Indian sewing, she could without any fear of interruption repeat over some passages of Scripture or sing her hymns. Quiet and secluded as was her retreat, several times was she, with her quick Indian intuition, haunted by the idea that listeners were near. Little did she think that it was her uncle, who had

not only been hidden near there but elsewhere, that he might hear and comprehend the words uttered in song.

Thus passed the greater part of the pleasant summer, but now the constant passing south of the great flocks of wild geese and ducks told them that they too must soon return to the mainland. Kistayimoowin, anxious to secure as much game as possible, was every day busily employed on his hunting excursions. On one of these trips, when far out from land in his birch canoe, he fired at a flock of ducks which were swimming in the lake. His gun, which was an old flint-lock, suddenly burst in his hands, and not only wounded him, but caused him to upset his canoe. So badly was he wounded that he found himself unable to swim, and could barely keep afloat. Calling loudly for help, he was fortunately able to make his wife and Astumastao hear, although he was perhaps half-a-mile from the island. Unfortunately there was no other canoe handy, and not another Indian was within miles of them. What was to be done must be done quickly, and so Astumastao, who, like all Indian girls, could swim, sprang into the lake, and as rapidly as possible made her way to the spot where the badly-injured man was being buffeted by the waves. The brave girl found that his con-

dition was most deplorable. The gun in exploding had blown off the greater portion of one of his hands, and in addition some of the iron splinters of the gun-barrel had been driven into his body, inflicting grievous wounds. So badly broken was the canoe that it was now utterly useless. All Astumastao could do was to have him hold on to the wreck with his uninjured hand, while she tied a piece of deer-skin thong around the wrist of the other arm, and thus stop in some degree the serious loss of blood which was slowly robbing him of strength and life.

To get him to the shore as quickly as possible was her firm resolve, although she knew well it was a desperate undertaking. Those who have thus tried to rescue a wounded or a drowning man know how trying is the ordeal. Astumastao was cool and collected as well as brave. Indians in such emergencies generally know just what to do. So it was here. The wounded man, who was utterly helpless, was so placed in the water at her side that, while not close enough to obstruct or impede her in swimming, he could still put his unwounded hand upon her back and thus keep afloat. Then bravely and carefully she struck out for the distant shore.

To swim half-a-mile through rough waters thus

encumbered was a feat that but few could accomplish, but this strong Indian maiden was able to persevere until success crowned her efforts. It was indeed a most trying ordeal, and there was but little strength left in her when she at length reached the shallow waters near the shore, into which her feeble aunt had waded out as far as possible. Carefully and tenderly they carried the badly-wounded man to the wigwam. He had lost so much blood that he was very weak and exhausted. Every effort was made by them to stop the flow of blood, but poor indeed was their success. It was soon evident to them that the end was near, and that life was ebbing to its close. Great indeed was their sorrow, but they crushed down their feelings as much as possible for the sake of the poor sufferer, who lay so limp and weak on a bed of balsam boughs and rabbit-skin robes.

For a time he seemed to be in a stupor; then suddenly with an effort he roused himself, and turning to Astumastao he spoke a word which, although but feebly uttered, startled her. It was "Nikumootah!" ("Sing!"). Comprehending the whole situation, Astumastao hesitated not, even if this request was a very strange one to hear from a pagan uncle, who had ever checked, if not



absolutely persecuted her, when she had attempted to sing one of her Christian songs. So, choking back all emotions of sorrow, she began in her low, sweet, plaintive tones to sing one of her favourite songs learned long years before at the Mission Sunday school. Of course she sang in her native tongue this first sweet hymn she had ever learned—

“Jesus my all to heaven is gone,
He whom I fix my hopes upon;
His track I see, and I'll pursue
The narrow way till Him I view.”

When two or three verses had been sung the dying man said—

“Who is this Jesus?”

Long years had passed away since the Indian maiden had received her last Sunday school lesson. Much, as we have seen, had faded away from her memory, but now, anxious to answer this important question as well as possible, she recalled all that she could. Fortunately for her, her devoted teacher had been one of those who believe in having the children commit to memory portions of the Sacred Book. And so, in answer to that thrilling question from the dying man, she replied—

“This Jesus is the Son of the Great Spirit, who

died to save us. 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'"

The sick man was thrilled and startled, and said, "Say it again and again."

So over again and again she repeated it.

"Can you remember anything more?" he whispered.

"Not much," she replied. "But I do remember that my teacher taught me that this Jesus, the Son of the Great Spirit, said something like this: 'Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.'"

"Did He say," said the dying man, "that included the Indian? May he go too in the good white man's way?"

"Oh yes," she answered, "I remember about that very well. The good missionary was constantly telling us that the Great Spirit and His Son loved everybody, Indians as well as whites. Indeed, it must be so, for I remember well those words I learned out of his Great Book, 'Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out,' and 'Whosoever will may come.'"

"Sing again to me," he said.

And so she sang—



"Lo, glad I come, and Thou, blest Lamb,
Shalt take me to Thee as I am.
Nothing but sin have I to give,
Nothing but love shall I receive."

"What did you say was His Name?"

"Jesus," she sobbed.

"Lift up my head," he said to his weeping wife.

"Take hold of my hand, my niece," he said.

"It is getting so dark, I cannot see the trail. I
have no guide. What did you say was His Name?"

"Jesus," again she sobbed.

And with that name on his lips he was gone.

NA-NA-BA-SOO ;

OR,

BENJAMIN CAMERON, THE WILD INDIAN, AND
WHAT CHANGED HIM.

NA-NA-BA-SOO was once a wild Indian warrior and hunter. When a mere boy he had been interested and delighted by the recital of the many legends that were common among his people.

As he grew older he was thrilled and fascinated by the tales told of the heroic deeds performed by the brave chiefs and warriors of his tribe. Eagerly had he listened to those exciting stories, and so now when he had reached young manhood's vigour, he was ambitious to emulate these actions, and prove himself of equal valour and worthy of equal praise.

But it was evident to him that he had fallen on sad, degenerate times. An alien race was driving his people before them, and his proud spirit chafed under the wrongs and oppressions that had come

to the red men by the ever-advancing conquering Pale-face.

For generations his tribe had not only roamed over the great prairies, north-west of what is now the province of Manitoba, but had hunted the moose and the black bear, as well as the rich fur-bearing animals in the great forests that surround Lake Winnipeg, and reach far up beyond the mouth of the mighty Saskatchewan. Thus, between hunting the buffalo on the plains and the various animals in the forest, he had spent most of his days.

Frequently, however, he varied these pursuits with warlike adventures, as with others he had gone off on war parties against his hereditary foes, the Sioux and Blackfeet. A few scalps hung in his wigwam as evidence of his prowess, while some ugly scars told that they had not been obtained without great risks.

Thus the years ran on, and Na-na-ba-soo was now in the prime of young manhood. He was ever found in the councils of his people, and in all the great "talks" which the Indians love so well he was deeply interested, especially when listening to the speeches of the old men, who recounted the glories of the past and the happy condition of the red men in the earlier days, when the buffalo,

instead of as now being confined to the western prairies, roamed in countless herds as far towards the sunrising as to the great lakes, and as far south as where "Mismis-sepe" (literally "Grandfather River") enters into the great sea. "Then," said these old men, "our people were contented to drink the clear sweet waters from our lakes and springs and rivers, and were happily exempt from what has been their greatest enemy, the fire-water of the Pale-face."

The breaking out of the small-pox plague among his tribe very much disturbed and excited Na-na-ba-soo. That it was a strange and terrible disease brought in by the Pale-faces was evident, as in the memory of their forefathers such a pestilence was never known. Against its attacks their most experienced conjurers and medicine-men were absolutely powerless, for even some of them were dying, as well as other classes of the tribe.

For a time his tribe stoically submitted to its ravages, and quietly laid away their dead. But when at length it struck down some of their most famous warriors, a wild, mad spirit of vengeance arose, and this being fanned at the council fires by the fiery words of some impassioned native orators, it was resolved to utterly destroy all the white people in that western land.



Promptly did the Indians make their few preparations to carry out the dreadful purpose. A band of warriors, each man with a record of daring and bloodshed, was selected and sent off on their horrid work. Their orders were to spare neither men nor women of that hated race whom they imagined were the cause of all their troubles. The only white people then in the land were the fur-traders at the different posts, and a few missionaries scattered at remote distances from each other.

Full of vengeance and thirsty for blood, the Indians set off on their hellish designs. The distance was so great that they travelled for days ere they reached the nearest abode of any of the now detested white-faces. This was the home of a missionary, the Rev. George M'Dougall, who, with the sole object of being a means of blessing to these people, had ventured into the remote wilderness, a thousand miles from the least vestige of civilization. Here he had built a little home and church and school-house, and with but slight assistance was carrying on his self-denying work among some friendly Indians, who already were being benefited by his teachings. When the warriors reached the neighbourhood of the white man's abode, they sent forward three or four of their number to recon-

noitre the ground. Under the mask of friendship, and with their weapons concealed, they stealthily approached the house. They were impressed with the quiet and stillness that seemed to prevail.

Entering the house without knocking, as is the custom of pagan Indians, they were horrified to find themselves in the presence of death. For into that missionary home the terrible small-pox had entered, and three members of the family there lay dead awaiting their burial. Very quickly indeed did these now frightened warriors withdraw, and as speedily as possible joined their comrades in their hiding-place. When they described what they had witnessed in the home of the missionary, a hasty consultation was held, and it was agreed that the disease had not been brought in by the "man-of-the-Book," else he would not have allowed it to have destroyed some of his own family.

Then they decided that the pestilence must have been scattered among them by the fur-traders, and they resolved to go to the trading post, and kill every white person there. Soon were they on the trail, and although it was a journey of some days and nights, they quickly accomplished it. On reaching the vicinity of the post they adopted the same tactics that had been observed when visiting



the Mission station. While the greater number of them remained hidden, a few went forward to reconnoitre under the mask of friendship. Great indeed was their amazement to find that the same terrible disease had entered into this place also, and that among its victims now lying dead was the highest official at the post.

Quickly returning to their comrades they made known this startling discovery, and as the result of their hurried council they resolved to as speedily as possible return to their own land, which they did, without having injured a single person or even exciting the suspicions of any one. Thus in all probability the death of a few whites saved the lives of all at the Mission stations and trading posts.

As the small-pox continued to rage in the village of Na-na-ba-soo, he resolved to leave it for ever. So, taking his young wife, the sole survivor of his family, he gathered up his traps and weapons and the few other things that constitute an Indian's outfit, and journeyed on to the east until they reached the western side of Lake Winnipeg. Here for some years they lived. When he had accumulated a large pack of the rich furs of that country he carried them to some distant trading post, where he exchanged them for the few necessities of his

life, principally ammunition, tobacco, tea, and clothing.

One winter the snow fell to an unusual depth. While the rich fur-bearing animals were as numerous as ever, those that he and his wife depended upon for food were very scarce that season. The reindeer and moose were but seldom seen. Bears were hard to obtain. Beavers seemed to have gone elsewhere and built their dams. The result was that Na-na-ba-soo and his wife were often hungry. So disheartened was he at this state of affairs, that one day in a fit of discouragement he raised his gun and shot his own wife. Then he took up the dead body and put it up outside on a high staging, beyond the reach of wolves, where in a short time it was frozen as solid as marble. His excuse for this dreadful deed was that "there was no use in two of them starving to death."

Coolly did he continue his hunting. When he found a bear's den, he dug out and shot that animal and lived on the flesh. When he discovered beaver houses, he cleverly caught and ate the nutritious meat of those industrious animals. Thus he hunted and managed to keep himself from starving through that terrible winter, the like of which for scarcity of game was never known before or since.



The picturesque place which Na-na-ba-soo had selected as his home attracted the attention of others, and soon quite a number of Indian families there pitched their wigwams. By tacit consent rather than by any official act, Na-na-ba-soo, who had long since married again, was treated as chief of the village.

The people were very much excited one day by the arrival of a white man with a Bible. They gathered around him and listened to his story, as he told them of the love of the Great Spirit towards all His children, no matter what was their language or colour. At first there was a good deal of opposition on the part of some, but the majority were anxious to accept this religion which the Pale-face said would bring soul comfort and peace of mind.

Na-na-ba-soo was an attentive listener, especially when the missionary read and told some of the beautiful stories that are in the Book. But when he was telling of God's love in the gift of His Son, who died to save poor humanity, Na-na-ba-soo was sceptical and could not understand such love. Still he would listen, and it was evident that a deep impression was made upon him. However, when the devoted missionary, anxious for the personal conversion of the people, urged him to renounce




AN INDIAN BIRYING-PLACE.



his paganism and accept Christianity, Na-na-ba-soo sadly shook his head, and said, "There was no such thing as his being noticed by the Great Spirit." When the missionary still pleaded with him, and told him of God's great love to all mankind, and quoted the promise, "Whosoever will come may come," Na-na-ba-soo turned on him almost fiercely, and said—

"Missionary, you must be mistaken. The Great Spirit will not stoop so low and notice such a man as I have been. Just think of it, I shot my young wife. No, no, the Great Spirit will never reach down to such a wretch as I am."

While the missionary was not sorry to see him thus brought to a consciousness of the enormity of his horrible crime, he was also thankful that with confidence he could tell him of a Saviour who could stoop down to love, and to notice, and save even him. The argument which the missionary used, and which at length lifted the now poor distressed Indian out of his despondency and almost despair, was the fact that the Son of God had told His disciples to go first with the offers of salvation to the very murderers of the Lord Jesus Himself. "Begin in Jerusalem," was His command. Find out those who had nailed Him to the cross; who had placed the crown of thorns on His head; who



had pierced His side. To them, and to the rabble who had cried, "Away with Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" they were to go and offer free and full pardon for all their sins, if they would turn from their iniquities and in faith look upon Him whom they had pierced.

This matchless story of infinite love fell with startling power upon the ears of Na-na-ba-soo, and lifted him up from his despairing condition into one of hope. Then, when the plan of salvation was further explained to him, there came into his heart the blessed assurance that he, even he, Na-na-ba-soo, had now a personal interest and acceptance in Christ Jesus.

Marvellous was the transformation. Na-na-ba-soo at once went from wigwam to wigwam, and in earnest yet modest language told that the clouds and doubts were gone, and that now he was a Christian. And his changed life showed its genuineness. He speedily desired baptism and admission into the little Church already formed.

As Na-na-ba-soo is a name associated with some of the old Indian Windegoo ideas, he asked for a full new name, and so was baptized as "Benjamin Cameron," taking this name from a Christian fur-trader, who had been specially interested in him.

Benjamin Cameron's conversion and baptism made a profound impression upon the rest of the people, and witnessing as they did the transformation wrought in him, and the joy and peace that came into his life, they became eager to possess the same experience that had so marvellously come to him. So eager were they for instruction, that although the missionary could only visit them once in summer, in his birch canoe, and once in winter with his dog-trains, yet so anxious were they to hear the Gospel and diligent in their efforts to retain it, that it was his joy to see many of them accept the same blessed assurance of the Divine favour that came as such a benediction to Benjamin.

Benjamin long continued to be a famous hunter, and as no more famine winters came, and the country began to be known as a favourite resort for moose, black bear, and other animals, he was often invited to act as a guide by white men, who came into those regions on hunting excursions. Very willing was he to thus oblige, for none were more clever than he, or knew better where to lead these visitors in quest of some exciting and successful sport. Yet it was remarked by all that before Benjamin allowed any of these visitors to ask him many questions about the animals to be

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hunted and their resorts, he would courteously and yet earnestly ask them the question, "Do you love the Great Spirit? Is His love in your heart? Is He your loving Father? Are you His child, and do you know it?"

No white man could be offended by his questions, so kindly were they put, but many a one has been abashed by them, and could only evasively answer. But when he met with an earnest Christian man, who could truthfully say, "Yes, Benjamin, I love the Great Spirit, and I too am a Christian," then great indeed was the joy of this happy Indian. Reaching out his hand to greet him, he would say, "Oh, I am so happy to meet you, my brother. I love Him too, and His love is in my heart."

Happy Benjamin. He was put in charge of that little company of Indians on the western shore of Lake Winnipeg, and great indeed was the missionary's joy to visit him and them after the long interval of six months which passed between each successive visit.

Years have passed since Benjamin finished his course and entered into rest. But his sweet, restful, happy face comes up before us, and our acquaintance with him is one of the sweetest memories of years of wild missionary life.

JOE, THE SIOUX:

OR,

THE SERMON ON THE PRAIRIE AND ITS RESULTS.

THE last Sunday we spent on the prairies was the hottest day of which I have any recollection. The fierce sun seemed to beat down upon us with tropical heat, and we all felt more or less prostrated by it. We had been travelling with our horses for nearly thirty days over those wonderful, fertile meadows, and as became us, as a party of missionaries, we rested on the Sabbath day, and in rotation held religious service.

When we reached this hot Sunday, the good minister whose turn it was to officiate was so prostrated by the heat that he declared it was impossible for him to preach. I had conducted the service the previous Sabbath, and had the good excuse that it was not my turn. The other worthy divines also had their excuses, and so it



really seemed as though the day would pass by and no service be held.

So I volunteered to take the work rather than that it should be neglected. This being announced, the different members of our company, with a few exceptions, gathered round the front of my canvas-covered wagon, and seated themselves as comfortably as they could in the prairie grass, improvising sun-shades where they were not the fortunate possessors of umbrellas.

Among the members of our party were two Sioux Indians, who had induced our leader, the Rev. George M'Dougall, to permit them to join our band. Their wish was to leave their own country, and to go and join the Indians on the great plains of the Saskatchewan. And perhaps it was felt best by them to get away ere a worse evil should befall them. For doubtless they had been seriously mixed up, or implicated, in the terrible Sioux-Indian war which had raged a short time before, in which hundreds of whites had lost their lives, and a large region of country had been desolated.

With but one of these Indians we have to do. The only name by which he was known to us was that of Joe. He was a wild-looking fellow, and yet had quite a knowledge of the English language



A TYPICAL INDIAN ENCAMPMENT ON THE GREAT WESTERN PLAINS




which doubtless he had picked up in the frontier settlements in times of peace, or when he was employed as a guide by hunting parties on the plains. But he hated the white man's religion, and generally spent the Sabbath in strolling off with his gun on a shooting excursion. Very picturesque looked the encampments of these Indians on those great western plains.

A few years ago such sights as the picture (p. 85) presents could frequently be met with. Now the ever-advancing waves of the white man's progress have swept them nearly all away.

This hot Sunday, however, Joe felt the heat so oppressive that he stretched himself out on the grass on his back, and with his old hat over his face, tried to sleep. The spot he had selected for his resting-place was only a few yards in front of my wagon, and doubtless he had selected this position from the fact that, as I had taken charge of the service the previous Sabbath, it would be held this day somewhere else, and so he would not be troubled with it.

When I stood up to begin, Joe partly got up, as though he would depart, but whether it was the prostrating heat or not, he dropped down again on the grass, and looked up at me with his glittering, coal-black eyes with anything but friendliness.



As I saw him remaining there, for the first time at one of the public services, the thought came—now, maybe, this is the only opportunity of saying anything that will reach Joe; so I lifted up my heart, and prayed, “Lord, give me a message for the poor Indian warrior and hunter that will reach his heart. Help me to deliver the message with such simplicity and plainness that, even with his little knowledge of English, he may understand it.” And with that thought or wish uppermost in my mind, I conducted the whole service, and preached the Divine Word. The service closed as usual, and each did his best to comfortably and restfully pass the remaining hours of the sweltering, oppressive day.

A few days after, our party broke up. For over two months we had travelled together. We were a band of missionaries and teachers who had left the province of Ontario, Canada, and were on our way to the great western part of the dominion. We had been tossed about for days in storms on the great lakes. We had travelled from Milwaukee to the Mississippi river. We had journeyed up that mighty stream in a steamer, to the then little city of St. Paul's. Here we had harnessed up our splendid Canadian horses to our canvas-covered wagons, and for thirty days had travelled west,

and north, through the then territories of Minnesota and Dakota. We had passed through many strange adventures and excitements. We had been "in perils oft" from the fierce tornado, which assailed us during the night, levelling nearly every tent to the ground, and then deluging us with rain. We had had to ford deep, rushing rivers, across which no bridges had as yet been built. We had some exciting experiences with the prairie fire, and for days had been in danger of being scorched by its erratic course, as it rolled over the land. And although we were not then in the region of many wild animals, we could well imagine the crowd of fierce buffalo and deer and other frightened creatures madly rushing before it for life and safety. We had passed through regions of the country where the wild Indians, maddened by defeat, and chafing under terrible wrongs and injustice, were on the look-out for weak or unarmed parties, upon whom they could wreak their vengeance. But through their midst we had passed unharmed, our little Union Jack, flying from a whip-stalk, being the talisman that made them our warm friends, and caused the rifles to be thrown in the grass, and the calumet, or pipe of peace, brought out, and smoked in amity and friendship with the subjects of the "great

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Mother across the waters." For under this name and title do the Indians of America, north and south of the boundary-line between the United States and Canada, speak of England's Queen. Her subjects are considered their friends, and the old flag of the Empire was our defence where, if it had been the Stars and Stripes, our lives would have been sacrificed, and our travelling outfit seized, in less time than it has taken me to state the fact here.

But now, after these "journeyings oft," we have crossed the boundary-line at Pembina, and are in British territory once more. We unfurl our national flag and sing "God save the Queen," to the evident dislike of a Yankee span of horses, which showed their disgust by running away with their heavily loaded wagon.

As it was my flag that had fluttered near them, and apparently excited their ire, I hastily rushed after them. They had turned off at right angles from the trail, and were vigorously galloping through the luxuriant grass. As I ran after them I heard a hearty laugh from one of the wagons behind. What it meant I learnt when I returned. Mr. M'Dougall, the old experienced missionary, said, "When you have been on the prairies a little longer, you will not be so foolish as to tire

yourself out running after a span of runaway horses."

"What would you do?" I answered.

His reply was, "Why, let them run until they are tired out. What harm can they do running away over a perfectly smooth prairie?"

He added, "Our western method of treating runaways is to fasten them to a big, strong wagon with a good load, and let them run to their hearts' content; then when they stop, or want to, put on the whip and keep them at it, until they are so sick of running away that they will never try it again."

We passed through the half-breed settlement, and saw the semi-civilized, semi-barbaric homes of those half-French, half-Indian people who, a short time after, under the leadership of Riel (to whom we have previously referred), Lepine, O'Donoghue, and others, were to attract so much attention, and to be such an element of disquietude and expense, both to the Dominion and Imperial Governments. The rising could only be put down by the marching in of a small but well-organized and equipped army, under the command of him whom we now know as Lord Wolseley, but who was then Sir Garnet Wolseley.

We found Fort Garry to be a quaint, old-fashioned, medieval fortress, that seemed to have

been, by a strong freak of nature, transported from some old, worn-out European nation, and dropped down amidst the luxuriant grasses and brilliant flowers of this wild prairie country. How startling the contrast to the surroundings!

We had been for a whole month moving northward through this wild, new prairie land; and now, after crossing the Red River of the north by a rope scow, we climbed up the river's bank, and were suddenly confronted by massive castellated stone walls, round towers, turrets, port-holes, cannons, and piles of balls.

Here our party broke up; the Revs. George M'Dougall and Peter Campbell, with their families and the two Messrs. Snider, and others, with their Indians, to go on and still onward, until they were twelve hundred miles nearer the western side of this great continent. My beloved and honoured friend, the Rev. George Young, remained here in the settlement that was springing up in the vicinity of Fort Garry, to open our first Mission for settlers speaking the English language.

Great indeed was his success, and many and well-deserved were all the laurels he won during the dark days that so soon came upon the little colony. But fortunately it did not last long. Brighter days dawned, and although old Fort

Garry has been torn down, the flourishing city of Winnipeg stands on its site, advancing with rapid strides, and with wondrous possibilities of yet being one of the world's great cities.

For a few days my wife and myself remained in our camp, awaiting a boat and Indian crew, which was expected to carry us down the Red River to its mouth, and then away up north to some far-off little Indian village that we had heard about, at which place we were expected to settle and make our home; while we wandered up and down those vast forest regions, far north of the prairie country, after the wandering red men, to try and bring them to Christ.

We made the acquaintance of some of the Indians of Red River during our stay there, and were not very favourably impressed with them. However, when away from their wigwams, and dressed up in their best, they looked much better than when seen amidst the filth and vermin of their poor tents. But little seems to have been accomplished in leading to Christ many of those who prowl around Fort Garry.

A couple of weeks of patient waiting, and the Indians arrived, when we said farewell to our loved namesakes, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Young, and their son, and started off on our long journey. The

boat was nothing but a big skiff, without deck or cabin. It had a steersman, who was called Big Tom; his place was in the stern, and he did his work with a long, heavy oar, called a sweep. The places assigned to us were in the stern, near to him. Before us, in the middle and front, were seven Indian oarsmen.

Our boxes and bales were soon put on board by our agile men, and we started on our long adventurous journey. We saw at once that the men were splendid boatmen, and so, aided by the current and the big oars, which were rowed in marvellous unison, we were soon many miles down the river.

Near the end of what is called the Indian settlement, I noticed the guide was steering the boat into the shore. On my asking what was the matter, his answer was, "We are going to take on board another passenger." Looking towards the shore, I saw several Indians and a large ox. We soon reached the bank of soft, black soil, into which the boat was jammed with all the speed the oarsmen could give her. Fancy our disgust, our astonishment, when we found that the additional passenger was to be this big ox. By main force—the men in the boat by pulling and lifting, and those behind also hard at work—the great fat brute was at length got on board, and assigned a

position directly in front of us ; his head often projecting over one side of the boat and his tail over the other. Then out we pushed again into the stream, and on we went. We were fourteen days in making the journey to Norway House.

Of course, with such a frail vessel we did not often think of going on during the night ; this was only tried once, and that because a fair wind was blowing. This the tired oarsmen ever welcomed. We had a small mast strapped to the outside of the boat, which could be easily hoisted and fastened with ropes. A square sail would then be hauled up, and we merrily glided along on our way.

At the places where we went ashore, sometimes the water was deep close up to the rocks, and we could easily step out upon them from the boat. But in other places, where the shore was low and sandy, our boat would ground on the shallows quite a distance out. When this happened, a good-natured, genial Indian, named Soquatum, would quickly jump into the water and, coming round to the side of the boat next to Mrs. Young, would take her on his back, and, holding to his head with her hands and arms, thus she would be safely carried ashore. My plan was to bare my feet and wade ashore.



One day Big Tom said, "Missionary, let me carry you ashore, like Soquatum carried your wife."

"All right," I said, as I was ready for a little sport, and it would save me the trouble of taking off my boots and stockings. So he jumped into the water, and I got on the side of the boat to get on his back. Just as I let myself go to catch hold of him, he slipped forward, and I took a dive over his head into the lake, amidst the uproarious laughter of all. After that I preferred to wade ashore.

But we must now go back to the party that went on west to Edmonton, on the North Saskatchewan and White Fish Lake. A few days after they had left Fort Garry, while Joe and one of the young gentlemen, Mr. Snider, who was going out as a mission-teacher, were walking along the trail, Joe began asking some strange questions.

"Mr. Snider," said he.

"Well, Joe, what is it?" was the reply.

"Didn't that young missionary tell lies when he preached that sermon that hot Sunday?"

"Why, no, Joe, he told the truth."

"But did he not tell a big lie when he said the Great Spirit loved everybody, white man and Indian alike?"

"No, Joe, God is no respecter of persons."

"But did he not tell a great big lie when he said the Great Spirit gave His Son Jesus to die for the Indian as well as the white man?"

"No," was the answer of the pious young teacher. "Jesus, the Son of God, died for all mankind."

"But—but—did he not tell a great big one when he said that the Great Spirit had prepared a fine place for all, Indians and whites, if they would be good and love Him?"

"No, Joe, that is all true, and the best thing you can do is to accept it and believe it."

Other conversations were held with the Indian, and he said at last, "Well, if I could believe all that young minister said that hot Sunday was true, I would become a Christian."

When they reached the far-off Mission station, Joe, instead of going to the plains and joining the wild, warlike, horse-stealing bands, settled down at the Christian village. He was thoughtful and interested, and by and by became a decided and thorough Christian man.

His life was so changed that all who met him were conscious of the fact. No one seeing him then would ever have imagined he had had such a history, and that he had ever been guilty of such crimes as were imputed to him.

A couple of years or so afterwards, that terrible

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scourge, the small-pox, broke out among these western Indians. It was supposed to have been brought among them by some traders from Montana. The havoc it wrought can hardly be over-estimated. Being to them a strange disease, they did nothing to arrest its ravages, and, in sullen despair, without even an effort at isolation, let it literally mow them down by thousands. Whole villages were nearly annihilated. It got into the home of the Rev. George M'Dougall, and three loved inmates died. It invaded the Hudson Bay Company's trading post, and the gentleman in charge, Mr. Clarke, was one of its first victims there. And, strange as it may appear, the fact that a few whites died of the disease in all probability saved the remainder from being massacred. To these incidents we have already referred at length in a previous sketch—Na-na-ba-soo.

But how few living amidst the blessings of civilization can realize all that is included in this simple statement: "The small-pox has got into the home of the missionary George M'Dougall, and three of his family have died." They were hundreds of miles from the nearest doctor or physician. They had tried to scatter their Indians on the plains so as to save some of them from catching this terribly contagious disease. Of those:

remaining at the Mission, numbers of them were down with the dread pestilence, and the few who escaped were so busy attending to their own sick, or so terror-stricken, that they could afford but little help to the afflicted missionary family. And there they were, all alone with their dying and their dead. No loving friends near to help. None to come and perform the kindly acts of attendance and helpful care. None to watch with them through the long hours of day, or through the sad, gloomy vigils of the night. No loving minister's voice to come in and read the "exceeding great and precious promises," and then at the mercy-seat to invoke the presence of Him who has promised to be His people's Comforter, and to carry their sorrows. Missionaries and their wives and children are human, and in the hour of sore trial they crave, as other people do, the presence and sympathy and prayers of those whose intercessions avail at the Throne.

But in this far-off home, on the banks of the North Saskatchewan, there were none of these visitants to come as angels of mercy to help in mitigating the deep sorrows of those days, which cannot be expressed in words. However, there was the blessed consolation—the Divine Presence was not missing, and His almighty arms were



underneath and round about, and so the survivors were saved from despair. Still, how sad was their condition! Can we look into such a home, at such times, without realizing that still there are severe trials in connection with missionary life!

When the loved ones died, one after another, the father and his son, the beloved Rev. John M'Dougall, had to saw the boards with a pit-saw to make the coffins, dig the graves, and bury their own dead. When they were lowering into the grave the body of the third loved one, there fell from the lips of John a sentence that touched the hearts of thousands of sympathetic Christians, and filled their eyes with tears. It was, "Father, it seems *so hard* that we have to bury our own dead."

There are some of us who can, in a measure, sympathize with such sorrow, for the arrow hath pierced our own hearts also; and there are grassy mounds under which rests all that was earthly of our own precious ones. But they shall rise again, and so we wipe away the tear, and rejoice in our sorrows, with glad anticipation that that glorious country, in which so much suffering and hardship has been cheerfully endured to win the Indians to Christ, has also been, in this fuller measure, permanently consecrated to Him by the laying down of the lives of some of His sanctified ones.

During the sad afflictions at Mr. M'Dougall's, my good friend the teacher had been stationed many miles away at another Mission, and was doing good service for Christ among the Indians. He—Mr. Snider—has since fully entered the ministry, and is a valued and useful minister.

When he heard of the sorrows and calamities that had assailed the missionary's household and the Indians around, he hurried down to be, as he was, a help and a blessing. One day somebody came in and told him that there was a poor, dying man outside, from the Indian wigwams, who wanted to see him, and had a message to leave with him.

Mr. Snider's sympathetic heart was at once interested, and he hurried out. He went down the path, and just as he was getting over the fence, he saw the dying man. His first thought was that the man was dead; but, when he saw the breast rise and fall, he knew there was still life in him. So he spoke to him: "Are you the man who sent for me?"

"Oh, yes, Mr. Snider, I sent for you. I could not die until I left with you a message. They told me you had come, and I was so glad."

"Who are you?" said Mr. Snider, for so terribly had the small-pox seized him that the missionary had not been able to recognize him.

"I am Joe," said the dying man.

"Oh, Joe, is this you? I am very sorry. Can I do anything for you? Can I bring you a drink of water, or help you back to the wigwam?"

"No," said the poor fellow, "but I want to leave a message with you. I cannot see you, but I can see Jesus, and I shall soon be with Him."

"Why, of course I will take your message, Joe. What is it?"

"Well, Mr. Snider, if ever you see the missionary who preached that sermon that hot Sunday, will you please tell him from me that that sermon made me a Christian. You remember I thought he was telling lies, but you told me it was all true, and I have found it to be so. You know I have tried to live right, and have given Him my heart; and now I cannot see you, but I see Jesus, and shall soon be with Him."

Thus he talked; and soon after he died in sweet and simple faith in that Saviour who would light up his pathway through the valley of the shadow of death, though his bodily eyes had gone through the fell disease.

* * * * *

Years passed away ere I heard of Joe's message to me, and of his happy, triumphant death, and that he looked back to that simple, plain talk on

the beautiful verse, the sixteenth of the third of John's Gospel, as the time when the good resolution to be a Christian first entered his heart. Doubtless very much was owing to the faithful words which were uttered by Mr. Snider and others. Still there was a time of seed sowing; and it seemed to have been that day, apparently the most unlikely when any permanent good would be done.

So I give the incident, the later part, as well as I can recollect it, from the lips of Mr. Snider and also of Mr. M'Dougall. Mr. M'Dougall was afterwards caught in a blizzard storm, on one of those wild western plains, and lay down to die. About fourteen days passed away ere his body was discovered. It was frozen as hard as marble, and but little harmed by prowling beasts. The features were as natural as in life. It seems, when all hope of reaching home had left him, he laid himself down on a snowdrift, folded his arms across his breast, and went to sleep, and was not, for God had taken him.



SO-QUA-A-TUM ;

OR,

THE STORY OF THE SICK INDIAN LAD, AND
WHAT RESULTED FROM IT.

“As my father lived and died, so will I !”

This was his emphatic answer to the pleadings of the missionary who had urged him to become a Christian. He was a fine-looking Indian, a successful hunter and a man of influence among his people, although not a chief.

His name was So-qua-a-tum.

His hunting-grounds were in the far north land, west of the Hudson Bay. None were more successful than he in tracking the bear to his den, or following up the wary moose until the successful shot would bring him to the ground. He knew the habits of all the wild beasts of his forests, and rejoiced in matching his knowledge and skill against their instincts and cunning.

He had all the pagan Indian superstitions and prejudices, and they were many.

When the missionary first met him, and by gifts of some tobacco and tea had so softened him that he was willing to freely converse with him, he found him a firm believer in his old paganism and a decided opposer of Christianity. No argument



"ON THIS BOY, LITTLE 'BRIGHT-EYES,' HE LAVISHED ALL HIS LOVE."

seemed to shake his faith in his old belief. He would end up a long talk with—

"Go your way, and I will go mine; and by and by I will reach the happy hunting-grounds of my forefathers beyond the dark mountains in the land of the setting sun."

Like the rest of the men of his tribe, he treated

the women and girls of his family with scorn and contempt. His best characteristic was that he was very fond of his one little boy. It was a cause of great annoyance to him that, with this one exception, although he had several wives, all his children were girls.

On this boy, whom he named Ke-che Kee-sik, *i.e.* Bright Eyes, he lavished all his love. The deer-skin suit of the lad was the best that the cleverest Indian woman of the family could make. The leather was tanned as soft and white as the finest kid, and the whole suit, as well as the moccasins, was beautifully ornamented with bead and porcupine-quill work. The father's own hands made the lad's bow and arrows, and dyed them in the brightest hues; and for him on the sandy shore of the lake there lay, in the pleasant summer-time, one of the most beautiful of birch canoes.

As joyous as could be the life of an Indian boy was that of Ke-che Kee-sik. But one day sickness suddenly laid its hand upon him, and the bright-eyed boy was full of pain and suffering.

The father, seized with fear, at once hurried away for old Tapastanum, the noted medicine-man, and urged him to come at once and use his boasted skill and magic to drive away the Meeche Munedo,

or Evil Spirit, that had dared to assail so cruelly his only boy.

Tapastanum was selfish, and so refused to move until the demanded quantity of tea and tobacco



TAPASTANUM, THE MEDICINE-MAN.

was laid at his feet. Then he arose, and arraying himself in all the hideous garb of his craft, he took up his medicine-bag and sacred drum and slowly walked to the wigwam where lay the suffering boy.

Ordering all the family out of the tent, with the exception of the father, he began his wild conjuring rites. Apparently surprised that the Meeche Munedo did not instantly retire before his first and most simple ceremonies, he began more vigorously to exercise his powers to conquer this bad spirit that was causing the boy such agony. He drummed more energetically, he yelled more loudly, and he danced until the sweat seemed to be pouring from him ; but all in vain.

Then he coaxed and threatened, and by the most hideous facial contortions he tried to frighten the evil spirit away. Still all his efforts were unavailing, although for hours he continued his actions, which seemed more demoniacal than human. To the watchful eye of the father there was no improvement in the condition of his son, and towards evening it was very evident that the boy was much worse.

When the old medicine-man, now utterly exhausted with his frantic efforts, retired for a smoke, So-qua-a-tum, who had heard of some successful medical work performed by the missionary, quickly gathered up some presents, and going to the old conjurer, said as he gave the presents to him—

“You have done your best. Take these presents and return to your tent.”

Strange to say, Tapastanum seemed glad to thus get so well out of the job ; so he quickly gathered up his gifts, and with his medicine-bag and drum, soon disappeared in the forest.

No sooner was he out of sight than So-qua-a-tum hastened to the home of the missionary. Although the illness of his son was as yet there unknown, it was easily seen that something very serious was the matter, for the generally proud, haughty man was much broken up. His stoical Indian nature tried hard to keep him in his usual impassive condition, but his solicitude for his son gained the mastery, and after a short struggle he broke completely down, and cried out in pleading and piteous tones—

“Oh, missionary, come quick and save my boy ; he is very sick.”

We greatly pitied him, and yet were thankful for an opportunity for trying to do him some good.

In a very short time my wife and I were off with him to see the sick boy. When we examined him, we found it to be a bad case of inflammation of the bowels, and as the disease had now run for some time, we very candidly told the father that the boy was very sick, and we could hardly tell what might be the result. If, however, he agreed,



we would do all we could for his recovery; but if the child died he must not blame us.

"Oh, go on at once, and do the best you can," he said. "I am sure your medicines are more powerful than the conjurer's, and you will surely succeed. But if you don't—" and here the poor man broke completely down under his great sorrow—"if you do not succeed, I will never blame you."

Quickly did we set to work. We nursed the lad as though he had been our own boy. Day and night we watched, and prayed, and waited. With heaven's blessing on the remedies used, and the careful nursing, the disease was conquered.

How beautifully at times do the signs of the relaxing grip of the grim monster, Death, show themselves! It was delightfully so in this case.

One morning, Ke-che Kee-sik opened his eyes, and turning to his anxious father, who through weary days and nights had hardly ever left his side, he said—

"Father, where are my arrows and bow? I think I could shoot a little now. Where are my arrows and bow?"

How thoroughly child-like was this repeated request, and how many there are in this world of suffering who have passed through just such ex-

periences! When your little ones pushed away their toys and picture-books, and would have none of them, despair seemed to take hold of you, and but little hope was left in your heart. But when they awoke out of a restful sleep and asked for "Dolly," or some book or toy, then hope again sprang up in your breast.

So it was here, and it was worth all our care and anxiety to see the radiant look that beamed in the great black eyes of that Indian father as he heard the childish voice asking for his bow and arrows.

Next morning, the little fellow inquired about his canoe, and wanted to paddle in it. This, however, could not just then be granted; but in a few days more he was convalescent, and was around among his little playmates.

We had during the child's illness abstained from any stated talks with So-qua-a-tum on the subject of religion. There is, in all things, a time to speak and a time to be silent. Here we felt in these anxious hours that we were talking in a way that would ultimately do most good, and in our surmises we were not mistaken.

As it was still in the pleasant summer-time, some of the services of Divine Worship were held in the open air. To us it was always interesting to

see the gathering of such a people for religious worship. Promptly and reverently did the Christian and friendly Indians gather as near as possible to the stand of the speaker. Others, however, still undecided, and some manifestly opposed to the missionary's teachings, but anxious to hear what was said, clustered in groups on the outskirts, and appeared to be utterly indifferent to the whole proceedings.

Reverently the service opens. But look! There on the outskirts, leaning against a tree, is a man who never before would even come near one of these religious gatherings. But now there he is, and although far away from the speaker, he seems to be deeply interested and anxious to hear every word that is uttered. That Indian is So-qua-a-tum, the father of Ke-che Kee-sik. He is anxious to hear what the Pale-face, who saved his boy, has to say.

The missionary's eyes are alert, and he sees the wistful look and attentive attitude. A strong, clear voice is one of Nature's gifts to him, and without any apparent effort he so uses it that all, even the apparently careless ones, as well as that distant attentive listener, can hear every word that is said.

When the next service began, the missionary,

to his great joy, observed that the Indian father was very much nearer to him, and, if possible, even more eager to catch every word that was uttered. Thus it went on for some weeks, until at last the once stubborn pagan came to the Cross, and publicly and boldly renounced his old religion and accepted Christianity. His courageous and decided stand not only gladdened the heart of the missionary, but made a profound and beneficial impression on all the Indians around.

When he was baptized, and made his simple but Scriptural profession of faith in Christ, among other things he said—

Once I was a very hard-hearted, wilful, stubborn pagan. I was resolved never to accept of the white man's religion or walk in the good white man's way. I wanted nothing from him. But it was because I was so blinded to my heart's interests, and deaf to the sounds that were for my good. But the white man came and saved my boy, and spoke such kind words in my wigwam to me in my sorrow, that I had to come and see if it was the same voice that spoke out the teachings of the Book which the Great Spirit has given him. I have found it is the same voice, and I could not but yield. Now I am glad, for I have rubbed the sand out of my eyes, and pulled the moss out of



my ears, and I am now able to see right and hear right."

Thus he went on and on, and as we listened to his expressive figurative words and illustrations, we could only think of Isaiah's prophetic utterance—

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.'

Here, indeed, was its glorious fulfilment.

From that hour the missionary had no warmer friend than So-qua-a-tum, and no life could be more beautiful and consistent than was his during the few years that he lived amongst us. Consumption seized him as its victim, but with a sublime and unfaltering faith he finished his course and entered into rest.

MASKEPETOON;

OR,

HOW THE ENEMY WAS FORGIVEN.

IN missionary work among the Indians of North America it is a well-known fact that one of the most difficult things to banish out of the hearts of those who are influenced by the truth is the spirit of revenge which they harbour against all who have done them any real or imaginary injury.

Very few, except those who have been for years in actual contact with the North-American Indians, can have any conception of the extremes to which this feeling is carried, and the expedients to which these red men will resort; so bloodthirsty and cruel are they to retaliate with accumulated interest. Some of these blood-feuds are handed down from generation to generation, and the dying father, who in his lifetime had not been able to wreak that vengeance upon his enemies which he desired, will transmit his quarrel to his son, with threats of

direst maledictions if he fail to carry it out, should the opportunity to do so ever present itself.

The following incident occurred years ago, on the great plains of the Canadian North-West, long before the waves of Anglo-Saxon civilization began to surge over those glorious, fertile prairies, which for so many generations were hid from the gaze of the outside busy world. Among the Indian tribes that roamed over those vast regions, the Crees, in those days, were perhaps the most numerous and powerful. The terrible small-pox and other epidemic diseases had not entered in among them, mowing them down by thousands, leaving them, as they are to-day, but a shadow or a wreck of their former glory.

The most powerful chief among this tribe was called *Maskepetoon*, or "Crooked Arm," from the fact that one of his arms had been so hacked and wounded in his hand-to-hand conflicts with his most terrible neighbours, the Blackfoot Indians, that, in healing, the muscles had contracted and stiffened, and the arm remained crooked.

He was a warlike chief, and his delight was in all the excitements of Indian conflicts, in cunning ambushes, and, when successful, in the practice of unheard-of barbarities upon the captives of other tribes who fell into his hands. Very pictur-



MASKPETOON IN HIS WIGWAM.



esque was the dress of many of these warriors of the plains. The quills of the eagle, which with them is considered the royal bird, formed the head-dress. Their shield was generally made of the tough leather of the neck of an old buffalo bull. The clothing, which was most elaborately ornamented and fringed, was made of the skins of the deer or moose, most beautifully tanned and prepared by the Indian women.

Some of their horses were really magnificent animals, and marvellously trained for Indian warfare.

The Rev. Mr. Rundle, of the English Wesleyan Missionary Society, was the first missionary who, at great personal risk, visited the Cree tribes, and faithfully declared the message of salvation to them. It was news indeed, and startled those wild prairie warriors; and the question went around among them, "Where did this little man come from with such strange tidings?" The conjurers were called upon to solve the question, and the answer was, that he had come direct down from heaven, wrapped in a large piece of paper.

The Rev. James Evans also, in some of his marvellous trips through that land of "magnificent distances," journeys that, as regards the miles travelled, very much exceeded any of the apostolic

journeyings of Paul, the preaching tours of John Wesley, or the episcopal itinerating of Bishop Asbury, visited Maskepetoon, and faithfully preached to him and his people.

Some accepted the truth and became Christians, but Maskepetoon was too fond of war to quickly receive the message of peace.

Years after, the Rev. George M'Dougall went out, in prosecution of his missionary work, to those mighty plains, on one of which in after years, as already stated, he so mysteriously died.

That he might be more successful in his efforts to bring them to Christ, Mr. M'Dougall frequently left his own home, and for months together lived with these red men, as they wandered over vast stretches of country, hunting the buffalo and other game. His custom was always to have religious service every evening where they camped for the night.

These camp-fire services are quite an institution in connection with work among the Indians of the different tribes. Their habits are so migratory, that it is necessary that the missionary should follow them up in their various haunts, where they have gone hunting the many kinds of game, and gather them together in larger or smaller numbers as is possible, and there preach to them

At these camp-fire services, hymns were sung, prayers were offered, and God's Word was read and expounded. One evening Mr. M'Dougall read, as his lesson, the story of the trial and death of the Lord Jesus. He dwelt particularly upon the prayer of the Saviour for His murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and, well aware of the Indian spirit of revenge that was so prominent in the hearts of his hearers, he dwelt strongly upon it, and plainly told them that, if they really expected forgiveness from the Great Spirit, they must have the same mind that was in Christ, and forgive their enemies.

Maskepetoon was observed to be deeply moved under the sermon, but nothing was said to him that evening.

The next day, as the great company, consisting of many hundreds, was riding along over the beautiful prairies, an Indian chief rode quickly to the side of Mr. M'Dougall, and in quiet but excited tones asked him to fall back in the rear, as they did not wish him to witness the torture and killing of a man, who was in that little band of Indians that was approaching them, although still so far away as to be almost undistinguishable to the eyes of a white man.

It seems that, months before this, Maskepetoon had sent his son across a mountain range, or pass, to bring from a sheltered valley a herd of horses which had wintered there. Very sublime and magnificent is some of the Rocky Mountain scenery. Travellers who have visited the Alps and other picturesque mountainous regions, declare that some of the views in the Canadian "Rockies" are not excelled in any other part of the world. Tourists in ever increasing numbers are availing themselves of the opportunities presented by the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, through and across those sublime mountains, to there see these magnificent fir-clad, snow-capped objects of the Creator's handiwork.

Among the foot hills of these mountains are many beautiful valleys, where the grass and herbage abounds all the year, and it was in one of them that Maskepetoon had kept his reserved horses. He selected one of his warriors as his son's comrade, to aid him in the work. From what was afterwards found out, it seems that the man, having a chance to sell the horses, his cupidity was excited, and so he murdered the chief's son, disposed of the horses, and, hiding for the time his booty, returned to the tribe with the plausible story that, when they were coming across

one of the dangerous passes in the mountains, the young man lost his foothold and fell over one of the awful precipices, being dashed to pieces; and that he alone was unable to manage the herd of horses, so they scattered on the plains.

Knowing nothing at the time to the contrary, Maskepetoon and his people were obliged to accept this story, improbable as it seemed. However, the truth came out after a while, for there had been, unknown to the murderer, witnesses of the tragedy. And now, for the first time since the truth had been revealed, the father was approaching the band in which was the murderer of his son.

That the missionary might not see the dire vengeance that would be wreaked upon the culprit, was the reason why this subordinate chief had requested Mr. M'Dougall to slacken his pace, and fall into the rear of the crowd. Instead of doing so, he quickened the speed of his horse, and rode up to a position a little in the rear of the mighty chief, who, splendidly mounted, was leading the van of his warriors. On they galloped over the beautiful green sward, the missionary's heart uplifted in prayer that the wrath of man might be turned to the praise of God. When the two bands approached within a few hundred yards of each other, the eagle eye of the old warrior chief



detected the murderer, and, drawing his tomahawk from his belt, he rode up until he was face to face with the man who had done him the greatest injury that it was possible to inflict upon him. Mr. M'Dougall, who still kept near enough to hear and see all that transpired, says that Maskepetoon, with a voice tremulous with suppressed feeling, and yet with an admirable command over himself, looking the man in the face who had nearly broken his heart, thus sternly addressed him :—" You have murdered my boy, and you deserve to die. I picked you out as his trusted companion, and gave you the post of honour as his comrade, and you have betrayed my trust, and cruelly killed my only son. You have done me and the tribe the greatest injury possible for a man to do, for you have broken my heart, and you have destroyed him who was to have succeeded me when I am not among the living. You deserve to die ; and, but for what I heard from the missionary last night at the camp-fire, before this I would have buried this tomahawk in your brains. The missionary told us that, if we expected the Great Spirit to forgive us, we must forgive our enemies—even those who had done us the greatest wrong. You have been my worst enemy, and you deserve to die." Then, in a voice scarcely audible through deep emotion,

he continued, "As I hope the Great Spirit will forgive me, I forgive you." Speaking up sternly, he added, "But go immediately from among my people, and let me never see your face again." Hastily pulling up his war-bonnet over his head, his forced calmness gave way; and, quivering with the suppressed feelings that tore his heart, he bowed down over his horse's neck and gave way to an agony of tears.

"Talk not of grief till thou hast seen
The tears of warlike men."

Maskepetoon lived for years afterwards the life of a devoted, consistent Christian. All his old warlike habits were given up, and, mastering the syllabic characters in which the Cree Bible is printed, the Word of God became his solace and his joy. He spent the remainder of his days in doing good. Very earnest and thrilling were the addresses which he gave to his own people, as he urged them to give up all their old sinful ways, and become followers of that Saviour who had so grandly saved him. Many listened to his words, and, like him, gave up their old warlike habits, and settled down to quiet, peaceful lives.

Anxious to benefit his old enemies, the Blackfeet, and to tell to them the story of the Saviour's love, he fearlessly and unarmed went among them

with his Bible in his hand. A bloodthirsty chief of that vindictive tribe saw him coming, and, remembering some of their fierce conflicts of other days, and, perhaps, having lost by Maskepetoon's own prowess some of his relations in those conflicts, he seized his gun, and, in defiance of all rules of humanity, he coolly shot the converted Christian chieftain down.

Thus sadly fell Maskepetoon, being a wondrous trophy of the Cross, and one whose conversion did a vast amount of good, showing the power of the Gospel to change the hardest heart, and to enable the warlike savage to conquer so thoroughly the besetting sin of the Indian character, even under the most extreme provocation, where very few indeed could have found fault if the price of blood had been exacted and the murderer summarily executed.

THE END.

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